



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



6095/07 (Presse 20)

PRESS RELEASE

2783rd Council Meeting

Education, Youth and Culture

Brussels, 16 February 2007

President

Ms Annette SCHAVAN,

Federal Minister for Education and Research

Ms Ursula VON DER LEYEN,

Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women
and Youth of Germany

P R E S S

Rue de la Loi 175 B – 1048 BRUSSELS Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 8716 / 6319 Fax: +32 (0)2 281 8026
press.office@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/Newsroom>

6095/07 (Presse 20)

1
EN

Main results of the Council

The Council adopted a set of key messages in the field of education intended as a contribution to the conclusions of the forthcoming Spring 2007 European Council.

The Council adopted a set of key messages concerning youth policy addressed to the forthcoming Spring 2007 European Council.

CONTENTS¹

PARTICIPANTS	4
ITEMS DEBATED	
EDUCATION	6
– Key messages to the Spring European Council.....	6
– Looking beyond 2010 – developing the "Education and Training 2010" work programme.....	7
YOUTH.....	8
– Key messages to the Spring European Council.....	8
– Reflection on the future perspectives for European youth policy	9
OTHER BUSINESS	11
OTHER ITEMS APPROVED	
<i>ENVIRONMENT</i>	
– Persistent organic pollutants	12

¹

- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- The documents whose references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>.
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the abovementioned Council Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

PARTICIPANTS

The Governments of the Member States and the European Commission were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Olivier PAASCH

Minister for Education and Scientific Research (German-speaking Community)

Mr Bert ANCIAUX

Flemish Minister for Culture, Youth, Sport and Brussels

Bulgaria:

Ms Ekaterina VITKOVA

Deputy Minister for Education and Science

Czech Republic:

Ms Dana KUČTOVÁ

Minister for Education, Youth and Sport

Denmark:

Mr Bertel HAARDER

Minister for Education and Church Affairs

Germany:

Ms Annette SCHAVAN

Federal Minister for Education and Research

Ms Ursula VON DER LEYEN

Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth

Ms Ute ERDSIEK-RAVE

Minister for Education and Women

Mr Andreas STORM

Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Education and Research

Estonia:

Mr Tiit NABER

Deputy Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Sean HAUGHEY

Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science

Greece:

Mr Andreas KARAMANOS

Secretary General of the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs

Ms Vasso KOLLIA

Secretary General for the New Generation, Ministry of Education

Spain:

Ms Mercedes CABRERA CALVO-SOTELO

Minister for Education and Science

Ms Aurora DOMÍNGUEZ GONZÁLEZ

Under-Secretary for Labour and Social Affairs

Ms Laura SANCHEZ

Minister for Education and University of the Autonomous Community of Galicia

Ms Micaela NAVARRO

Minister for Equality and Social Welfare of the Autonomous Community of Andalusia

France:

Mr Christian MASSET

Deputy Permanent Representative

Italy:

Mr Giovanni LOLLI

State Secretary for Youth Policy and Sport

Mr Alessandro PIGNATTI

Deputy Permanent Representative

Cyprus:

Mr George CHACALLI

Deputy Permanent Representative

Latvia:

Ms Baiba RIVŽA

Minister for Education and Science

Lithuania:

Ms Violeta MURAUSKAITE

Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Social Security and Labour

Mr Romas ŠVEDAS

Deputy Permanent Representative

Luxembourg:

Mr Georges FRIDEN

Deputy Permanent Representative

Hungary:

Mr Egon DIENES-OEHM

Deputy Permanent Representative

Malta:

Ms Theresa CUTAJAR

Deputy Permanent Representative

Netherlands:

Mr Peter W. KOK

Deputy Permanent Representative

Austria:

Ms Claudia SCHMIED

Federal Minister for Education, Science and Culture

Ms Andrea KDOLSKY

Federal Minister of Health, Family & Youth

Poland:

Mr Roman GIERTYCH

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for National Education

Portugal:

Mr Pedro SILVA PEREIRA

Minister for the Prime Minister's Office

Ms Maria de Lurdes RODRIGUES

Minister for Education

Mr José MARIANO GAGO

Minister for Science, Technology and Higher Education

Romania:

Mr Mihail HĂRDĂU

Minister for Education and Research

Mr Károly BORBÉLY

President of the National Authority for Youth

Slovenia:

Ms Mary Veronica TOVŠAK PLETERSKI

Deputy Permanent Representative

Slovakia:

Mr Jozef HABÁNIK

State Secretary at the Ministry of Education

Finland:

Mr Antti KALLIOMÄKI

Minister for Education

Ms Nina VASKUNLAHTI

Deputy Permanent Representative

Sweden:

Ms Ingrid HJELT AF TROLLE

Deputy Permanent Representative

United Kingdom:

Ms Anne LAMBERT

Deputy Permanent Representative

Commission:

Mr Ján FIGEĽ

Member

ITEMS DEBATED

EDUCATION

– *Key messages to the Spring European Council*

The Council adopted a set of key messages in the field of education intended as a contribution to the forthcoming Spring 2007 European Council (5625/07).

Following a reference to the progress achieved in 2006 in implementing the "Education and Training 2010" work programme, the Council endorsed the following 2007 key messages:

"Education and training are prerequisites for a well-functioning knowledge triangle (education - research - innovation). They have a key role in boosting growth and jobs, and ensuring equal opportunities and social cohesion for all citizens. National reform programmes indicate that promising developments are either under way or being prepared in many Member States. However, more substantial efforts are required to pursue such reforms and to fully implement the 'Education and Training 2010' work programme, including by strengthening the exchange of good practice between the Member States. Comprehensive lifelong learning strategies based on efficiency and equity are yet to be put in place in most Member States. To provide a broad skills base underpinning Europe's capacity for excellence and innovation, reforms need to be stepped up to further strengthen the different levels of education. In particular, efforts should be made to modernise higher education and to ensure high quality and attractive vocational education and training.

Investment in education and training is crucial for Europe's future. At the same time, educational policies and practices require a stronger evidence base. There is a need to develop a culture of evaluation and to promote further research. In addition, full use must be made of the opportunities provided by the Structural Funds and the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013."

– *Looking beyond 2010 – developing the "Education and Training 2010" work programme*

To mark the start of a reflection process concerning a future strategic framework for the EU's action in the field of education and training, the Council held an exchange of views on the future of the "Education and Training 2010" work programme.

The debate covered, in particular, the following items (5430/07):

- the role of the 'Education and Training 2010' work programme with regard to the Lisbon process;
- how can the impact of the 2010 work programme be strengthened at the level of the Community and the Member States, in order to contribute to the quality of education and training systems;
- major new challenges and topics which the process should address beyond 2010.

Summarising the exchange of views, the Presidency emphasised the importance of building on what has already been achieved and the need, among other things, to:

- maintain education and training at the heart of the Lisbon Strategy;
- ensure access to education and training and equal opportunities for all;
- develop a learning culture which appeals, in particular, to young people;
- promote and take increasing note of educational research;
- develop and maintain a lifecycle approach towards education, starting in early childhood and continuing throughout life;
- recognise the role of education and training as a catalyst for social integration and teaching democracy.

Progress on implementation of the "Education and Training 2010" work programme is reported in biennial joint progress reports of the Council and the Commission. The next biennial joint progress report will be prepared in 2007, for adoption in early 2008. It should already indicate policy orientations for the development of the work programme in education and training beyond 2010. Today's debate in the Council thus provided an early opportunity for Ministers to contribute to this report.

YOUTH

– *Key messages to the Spring European Council*

The Council adopted a set of key messages concerning youth policy addressed to the forthcoming Spring 2007 European Council (5841/07). Following a reference to the progress made in implementing the European Pact for Youth in 2006, the Council announced in its document priority steps for further implementation of the Pact.

- Particular attention should be paid to young people in the transition period between school education, vocational training and employment;
- the use of local and regional strategies to implement the European Pact for Youth can play a significant role in ensuring high quality measures aimed at better social and professional integration;
- through individually tailored measures, all young people should be offered equal opportunities for social and professional integration;
- to enhance the social and professional integration of young people, governance of the Lisbon Strategy needs a more visible youth dimension.

The adoption of the European Pact for Youth was a recognition of the importance of integrating young people into society and working life and of making better use of the potential they represent.

On the basis of the evaluation of measures considered relevant, the European Council emphasised in Spring 2006 that further progress was needed regarding the implementation of the European Pact for Youth. The key messages were prepared against this background.

– ***Reflection on the future perspectives for European youth policy***

The Council held an exchange of views on the basis of a reflection paper on the future perspectives for European youth policy (5626/07).

The debate covered, in particular, the following issues:

- a) the kind of sustainable measures that could be developed to promote exchange and cooperation among Member States, including at local level, in order to provide added value for further implementation of the European Pact for Youth;
- b) instruments ("joint consultation mechanisms") that could be useful for the active participation of the (Youth) Council and youth policy stakeholders in political discussions and decision-making processes on issues relating to young people;
- c) issues on which the development *of these instruments should be focused*.

At the end of the debate, the discussions can be briefly summed up as follows:

- a) It was generally recognised that there was no need for new structures or procedures but that it was enough to develop the existing ones, namely the open method of coordination, which enables good practice to be exchanged. Local and regional levels must be involved in the implementation of the European Pact for Youth.
- b) Direct dialogue with young people must be improved, namely through meetings with the European Youth Forum before the Youth Council; national institutions dedicated to youth activities must also be involved.
- c) The items that have already been dealt with but still need more attention are, for instance:
 - development of the creativity of young people
 - entrepreneurship
 - compatibility between family and work
 - violence
 - reduction of youth exclusion

- youth health
- citizenship
- housing
- promoting tolerance

The outcome of the debate should be reflected in Council conclusions to be adopted in May.

OTHER BUSINESS

- The problem of violence in schools (6213/07)
 - Intervention by the Polish and the Greek delegations, supported by Cyprus and Hungary, calling for a plan to combat violence in schools

- A possible European Year linking Education, Culture and Creativity (6470/07)
 - Intervention by the Commission

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**ENVIRONMENT****Persistent organic pollutants**

The Council adopted a regulation amending regulation (EC) No 850/2004 on persistent organic pollutants (5257/07). The Belgian, Danish, Spanish, French and Swedish delegations voted against.

The regulation amends Annex V to regulation (EC) No 850/2004 following a Commission study on the implementation of the waste-related provisions of this Regulation, which established maximum concentration limits for the purpose of Part 2 of Annex V (waste management). Above those limits, risks to human health and the environment could not be excluded. The new measures are the most appropriate to ensure a high level of protection.
